96. AN ANALYSIS OF 404 NON-MILITARY INCIDENTS INVOLVING EITHER CHEMICAL OR BIOLOGICAL AGENTS

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INTRODUCTION

GOALS:

1. Facilitate our understanding of chemical and biological terrorism by profiling both the perpetrator and the incident.
2. Relate the broad choice of agent to other factors that characterize both the perpetrator and the incident.
3. Generate a set of tables useful for a variety of analytical tasks.

DATA SOURCES:

All data was acquired from open sources including newspapers, magazines, books, transcripts of radio and television broadcasts and reports prepared by various organizations.

ANALYTICAL METHODOLOGY:

1. Data describing 404 incidents of the non-military use or threatened use of CB agents were collected and then compiled in the CABO Database.
2. The data were coded for 18 factors that characterize both the perpetrator and the incident.
3. Tables were prepared using PSG's Incident Analysis Tool to facilitate analysis of the relationship between agent and the 18 characterization factors.

CHARACTERIZATION FACTORS:

Perpetrator Categories
Perpetrator Action
Cost
Dedication and Discipline
Dissemination Technique
Engineering Skills
Information Access
Load Carrying
Logistics
Motive
Number of Adversaries
Outcome
Planning Ability
Security and Tactical
Specialized Materials
Target
Technical Knowledge

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS REGARDING AGENTS

Type of CB material: Chemical or Biological?

1. 250 of 404 incidents involved a toxic chemical (62%)
   Specific chemical identified in 191 incidents
   Specific chemical not identified in 59 incidents
2. 101 of 404 incidents involved a biological pathogen or toxin (25%)
   Specific biological identified in 92 incidents
   Specific biological not identified in 9 incidents
3. Type of CB material was not identified in 53 incidents (13%).

Availability of CB materials

1. CB material was actually acquired in 264 incidents (64%)
2. CB material was actually or apparently used in 234 incidents (58%)

AGENTS INVOLVED IN 3 OR MORE INCIDENTS

Bacillus Anthracis
Butyric Acid
Mercury
Botulinum Toxin
Rat Poison (Warfarin)
Thallium Salts
Ricin
Arsenic
Potassium Cyanide
Sarin
Sodium Cyanide
LSD
Paraquat
Salmonella Species
Strychnine
Vibrio Cholera
Yersinia Pestis

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS FROM THE COMPARISON TABLES

PERPETRATOR CATEGORIES

Perpetrators whose actions were based on religious or philosophical beliefs were the most common type of adversary (33%) and were most often associated with biological agents (53%).

PERPETRATOR ACTIONS

Actual use other than for extortion was the predominant type of action (51%). Threatened use without clear demands was the predominant type of action involving biological agents (51%).

COST

Approximately 75% of all incidents apparently cost less than $250.00.

DEDICATION AND DISCIPLINE

Most incidents required little or no dedication or discipline (69%).

A willingness to persevere was more often required in chemical incidents (33%) than in biological incidents (9%).

DISSEMINATION TECHNIQUE

The most common means (40%) of either actual or threatened dissemination was via contaminated consumables (food, water, medication, etc.).

ENGINEERING SKILLS

Approximately 80% of all incidents in which agent was used required little or no workshop or engineering skills to fabricate the dissemination device.

INFORMATION ACCESS

The majority of incidents involving biological agents required the lowest level of information access (63%).

LOAD CARRYING CAPABILITY

Dissemination devices would fit in the perpetrator's pocket in a majority of biological incidents (62%).

LOGISTICS

Approximately 64% of all incidents required no more than a personal vehicle and typical household kitchen equipment.

MOTIVE

deological considerations were the most common apparent motive (49%).

NUMBER OF ADVERSARIES

Most incidents (67%) apparently involved no more than three individuals.

OUTCOME

Approximately half of all incidents (49%) were successful.

Chemical incidents failed less often (3%) than did biological incidents (9%).

PLANNING ABILITY

Very few incidents displayed sophisticated planning (12%).

SECURITY AND TACTICAL

47% of the incidents required no security or tactical skills.

Incidents involving chemical agents more often (56%) required basic skills than did incidents involving biological agents (19%).

SPECIALIZED MATERIALS

The majority of incidents (75%) did not require access to specialized materials handling or processing equipment.

TARGET

Groups of individuals linked by a common characteristic were the most frequent target (55%).

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

In 79% of the incidents the perpetrator needed no more technical knowledge than the ability to recognize toxic or infection material.

VENUE

Retail stores and reproductive rights clinics were the most common venues for both chemical and biological incidents.

CONCLUSIONS

Material that may be a CB agent is likely to be encountered in slightly less than two-thirds of all incidents.

Incidents involving chemical agents are more likely than those involving biological agents.

"Military" agents are less likely to be encountered than industrial materials.

Perpetrators whose actions are based on religious or philosophical beliefs represent the greatest threat.